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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

WHITEHOUSE GOVERNMENT

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December 7, 1962

J - Mr. Johnson
G - Mr. Packler
S/TS - Mr. Luckett
NSC - Mr. Chave
NSR - Mr. Lauer

[Mitze Memorandum: Views on Costs of
Mr. Brocco-Bannercourt (Sec. 6.)]

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Attached for your information is a copy of a
file memo addendum for the R&D Executive Committee.

Urgent
H. Peterson
5/8/63
Sub. 693

Attachment:
as stated.
File Copy No. 2 (attached)

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Paul H. Nitze
6 December 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR NSC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

SUBJECT: Views on Cuba of [REDACTED] Mr. Ernesto Bettencourt, Pan American Union

The following views on Cuba were expressed by [REDACTED] Mr. Ernesto Bettencourt, formerly a member of Castro's "26 July Movement" [REDACTED] to a member of my staff in an interview on 4 December 1962.

The Missile Crisis Weakened Castro

Castro came to power almost exclusively on a pledge to provide political freedom to the Cuban people, with essentially no social program. Even without any social reforms, Castro would have achieved a heroic mold in the eyes of the people for this original battle against tyranny. After achieving power, Castro adopted social programs in order to shift the aspirations of his people away from political freedom. Next he adopted rampant nationalism and anti-U. S. programs. Each of the foregoing shifts in goals led Castro to drop his previous goals - e.g., when he shifted to economic goals he destroyed freedom (consciously); when he shifted to nationalism, he imposed additional economic hardships.

Now Castro is at the end of the line. He has no further basis for demanding and justifying sacrifices from his people. His decision to accept the Soviet Union's weapons and military personnel dried up the emotional resources available to him. The departure of these forces and weapons, Castro has been left, despite his irrevocable commitment to communism, with only the mutual sense of personal danger among the elite of his regime to hold the structure together.

Impact of the Crisis Itself

It is important to realize that each adult Cuban has been raised under the constant reminder of the relationship of his little country to the colossus neighbor to the North. Then Castro came along and showed that this relationship need not continue. As a matter of fact, his early captures of U. S. military personnel were the beginnings of his effort in this regard. His later defiance of the U. S., combined with emphasis in his propaganda upon capitalism's decay and communism being the wave of the future, was designed to appeal to this basic Cuban psychological inferiority.

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However, in order to cement the movement of the Cuban people from their attitude of inferiority to a new stiffened attitude, particularly the realistically-oriented military leaders, Castro had to provide physical proof of his ability to withstand U. S. strength. Hence, ultimately he felt the need to rely on Soviet rocket support and their military presence.

The theme of Cuban and Soviet propaganda insofar as the Cuban internal situation was concerned, then sought to pulverize the individual will to resist communism by flaunting this physical evidence of the solidarity of communism.

The withdrawal of Soviet rockets, together with the removal of bombers and personnel, if this comes about, has taken the stiffening out of the Cuban political situation. Castro's error in refusing to agree to inspection, which has resulted in the opportunity of the United States to fail to give a full anti-invasion pledge, has left the Cuban regime and Cuban people with a great uncertainty as to the future. This gives the U. S. an opportunity which should be played to the hilt.

Castro Faces a Difficult Decision

The failure of the guarantee of the Soviet Union to protect Cuba from the United States has a tendency to show up Castro's other failures which he had been able to hide. He now faces an awful dilemma. First, he can continue to talk about the threat of the U. S. However, if he makes too much effort in this regard, he may strengthen his opposition - in the absence of Soviet stiffening. Second, if he takes the reverse line, that the Soviet withdrawal represents a great communist victory, insuring the future safety of Cuba from the United States, he removes the sole remaining cover with which to hide his other problems.

Recent Information Available to Bettencourt

Prior to the Cuban missile crisis, Castro's internal situation had deteriorated badly. His militia, his regular Army and even the communist "watch" committees had demonstrated a worsened morale. The situation today must be even more critical now that the myth of invincibility has been shattered.

Suggested Initial Strategy

1. Keep the pressure on Castro to accelerate disintegration of his regime.
2. Threat of Invasion. Castro is a very suspicious man. Keep him and his regime in a constant state of distress with calculated leaks and denials. Do not further, through public declaration, specify the details of the anti-invasion guarantee - keep it fuzzy. In the long run, the invasion will probably not be necessary but the threat of it is a potent weapon.
3. Continue Diplomatic Measures. It is very important in view of the general Latin American situation to continue all diplomatic measures necessary to isolate Castro. Remember that although the use of troops remains optional for members, it is mandatory for all members of the Rio Pact to comply with all other measures voted by the necessary majority. In this way, even if Brazil or others

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disinclined to do so, all Latin American nations could be required to sever diplomatic relations with Cuba, sever trade relations, etc. In this regard, in order for the United States to avoid the Giant/Pigmy image, Caribbean nations which enjoy general respect -- e.g., Honduras and Costa Rica rather than --- Nicaragua and Guatemala - should be used to take the lead in advocating such measures, with the United States being "reluctantly" led along.

The embargo against shipping should be continued (the OAS states should refuse to deal with any ships engaged in trade with Cuba).

More Active Measures -- After the foregoing measures have been put into effect, there should be a series of more active measures.

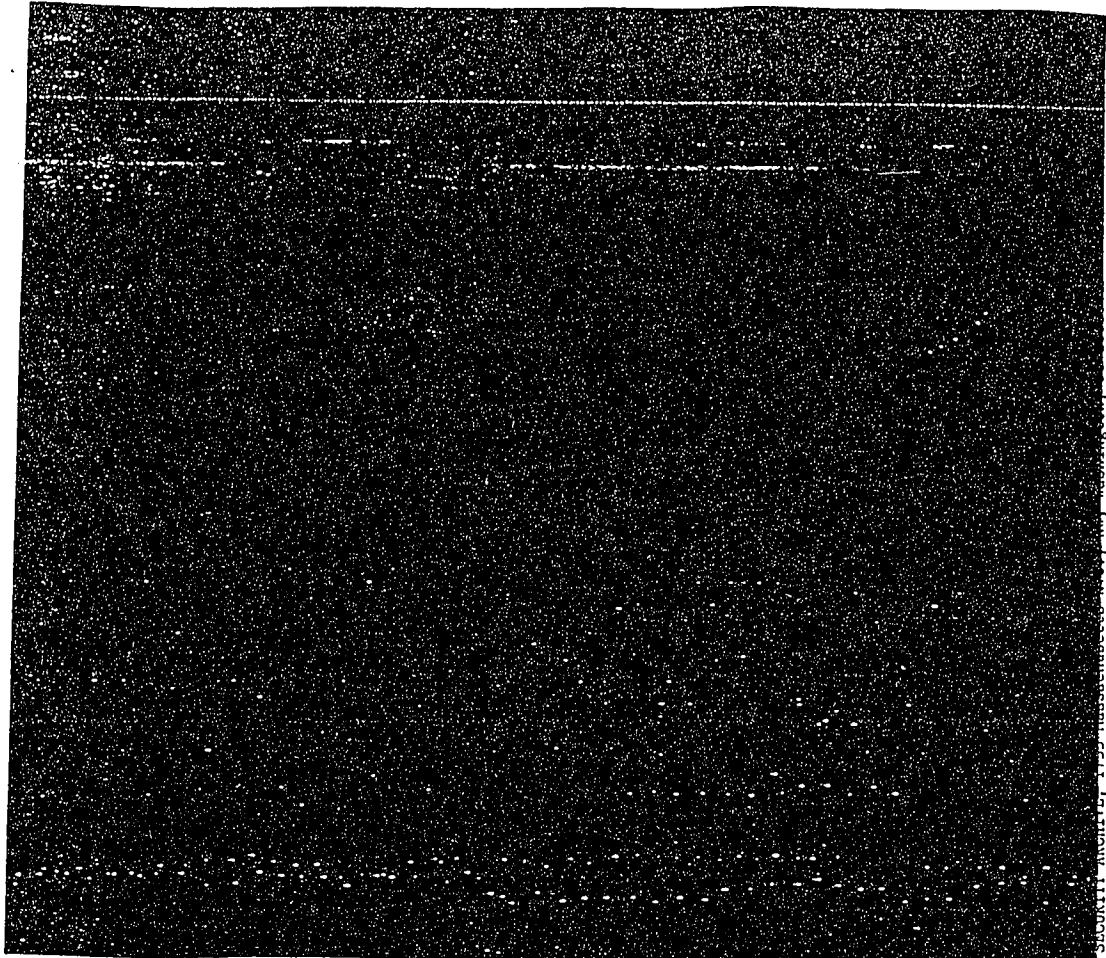
1. In this regard, it is necessary for all concerned to understand the two dimensions of the Cuban situation - the national aspects and the international aspects involving the entire free world. With regard to the national aspects, this being Cubans must be brought to realize that the U. S. cannot realistically be expected, as a part of her "great power politics" to go much further in major moves than she has done at the present time. From here on the United States contribution must be a subtle and refined one that avoids exacerbation of the greater power confrontation. Conversely the U. S. must realize that in the conduct of "great power politics" she cannot control the outcome of the Cuban internal situation exclusively as an international matter. There must be a monitoring of the developing political internal and of external groupings to ascertain how best to integrate this dynamic situation with the national aspects. This highlights the need of the U. S. Government to be aware that many Cubans no longer have any faith in themselves, tend to rely completely on the U. S., and are likely to tell U. S. Government officials exactly what they want to hear.

2. In planning more measures, the U. S. Government must be aware that the Cuban political situation has been thoroughly atomized as a result of first Batista and then Castro purges. Therefore, any attempt to bring unity among various "splinter" groups is bound to fail. The U. S. should follow the policy of encouraging several groups, continuing to evaluate them all, until one or two bid fair to attract a following. Perhaps later some coalescing around these stronger groups from amongst the other "splinter" groups may be possible. Any other policy tends to pre-establish an unearned right to represent the Cuban people and will be disavowed.

3. Landings by external forces, at this time, are bound to fail. No opposition group could muster the forces necessary even when the U. S. was prepared to help overtly. It is still less feasible now.



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The Threat of Castro

Castro visualizes his position, now, in Cuba vis-a-vis Latin America as parallel to his position vis-a-vis Cuba when he was holed-up in the Sierra Madre Mountains, i.e., he is in a position to erode the parties of the right to provide sustenance to the left, and actual political support for the left-wing regime in the case of Brazil. He is in a position to counteract the objectives of the Alliance for Progress.

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Authors Note

The undersigned has the impression that [Bettencourt] is a Cuban of great vision and skill whose views and abilities should be utilized as the Cuban affair proceeds.

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The Cuban Missile Crisis Revisited UMI 2005

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B	P ⁹	X	1	2	3	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	
C	P ¹⁰	1	2	3	4	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	
D	P ¹¹	1	2	3	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	
E	P ¹²	X	1	2	3	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	
F	P ¹³	X	1	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	
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The Cuban Missile Crisis Revisited: An International Collection of Documents, from the Bay of Pigs to the Brink of Nuclear War

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The Cuban Missile Crisis Revisited: An International Collection of Documents, from the Bay of Pigs to the Brink of Nuclear War reproduces a comprehensive collection of records from the archives of the three key governments involved in the most dangerous confrontation of the Cold war. Declassified records from the United States, Russia and Cuba significantly advance analysis of the historical foundations of the missile crisis, the policy calculations and considerations of President John F. Kennedy and premiers Nikita Khrushchev and Fidel Castro, and the overt and covert military and paramilitary operations that combined to bring the world to the threshold of a nuclear exchange. Topics extensively covered in the documentation include the failed U.S.-led invasion at the Bay of Pigs, renewed attempts to overthrow Castro through Operation Mongoose and Operation Northwoods, U.S. military contingency planning for conflict with Cuba, naval warfare, Soviet and Cuban decision making and communications during the crisis, and the repercussions for U.S.-Soviet relations, and Soviet-Cuban relations in its aftermath. Materials were identified, obtained, assembled and indexed by the National Security Archive, a non-profit Washington D.C. based research institute and library. The microfiche collection is accompanied by a printed guide and index.

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